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STATE FOR R/MR, I/PP, WHA/BSC, WHA/PDA, INR/IAA, PM

STATE FOR INL, INR/R/MR, NEA/IR

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [OPRC](#) [PTER](#) [CI](#) [IR](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION - IRAQ

¶1. On December 23, conservative, independent "La Tercera" (Sat. circ. 195,626) ran an editorial entitled "The Complex U.S. Scenario in Iraq." Quote:

¶2. "Many compare the conflict in Vietnam to the situation in Iraq today.... The comparison comes from the growing feeling that it is impossible to win the war in Iraq and that it is necessary to withdraw.... A more in depth analysis shows that the comparison...has to do with the view the U.S. elite has of the role the United States must play in the world. This is an old debate between 'realists' and 'idealists'.... Today everything seems to show that just as in Vietnam, in Iraq the realists will be the ones to finally design the strategy to withdraw. Representing the realists is the Baker Commission, which has called for a military withdrawal in 2008 and has proposed to begin contacts with (Iraq's) neighbors to stabilize Iraq through diplomacy. The White House would do well in remembering the lessons of 'departing with honor' that realists Nixon and Kissinger designed for the U.S. in Vietnam, so that it does not make the same mistakes."

KELLY